

with those who thought that the whole policy and management of those companies would be brought up at the elections the moment you offered any inducement to public men to do it; and besides, where is the necessity for this? There can be no mistake about one thing. If the proof had not been before us, the fact might have been doubted. But we know that gentlemen have been doing the work for \$100 per year for the last ten years. We propose to fix a limit—and gentlemen object. Why? They say they are looking to the whole scheme of reform as being for the welfare of the people, and to protect the treasury. He would like to know by what sort of reasoning they could make manifest their purpose, while they refused to shut the door against this attempt to increase salaries to be paid out of the public coffers.

The objection he had had to the mode of appointment, as he had said before, was, to bring about political agitation on the subject, and this danger is to be increased by holding out the inducement of handsome compensation. The Convention had determined, by a majority, that they should be appointed in that way. He was in favor of limiting the salary to prevent the evils he apprehended. He thought it would have been better to have said nothing about it in the Convention, and to have left the matter to the Legislature to settle all the details. But if we are to meddle with it at all, he was for fixing the salary as well as changing the mode of appointment.

Mr. THOMAS said he disliked to occupy the attention of the Convention, but it seemed to him that the gentleman from Prince George's [Mr. Tuck,] should be replied to. He would ask, was not this a most singular exposition we had just witnessed? Determination of the majority at this stage of our business, when we had a multitude of it to do. Look at the strange vote which had just been taken, composed in part of the very members who had contended pertinaciously for two propositions, and which he thought were incompatible with the votes that had just given. And what, he inquired, were the two propositions mooted here? One argument was, if you made the salaries of these State agents very moderate, no one who was competent would accept the office. That came from the gentleman from Washington, [Mr. Schley,] and he laid great emphasis upon the words "you would get no one to fill it." Well, the Convention had decided, by a majority, that they would elect those officers. What followed? The very gentlemen who had said that he ought not to put the salary so low that no one would compete for it, had proposed to fix the compensation at the smallest sum in contemplation.

Mr. TUCK, (in his seat.) That was not my doctrine.

Mr. THOMAS. The gentleman remained silent, and did not object to the argument that had given votes to his side of the question. Other gentlemen had argued here that the Legislature was the only proper depository of the whole question of appointing the agents of the State, and fixing their salaries. The Convention had determined

that these commissioners should not be the mere foot-ball of party, to be put in and out, as parties fluctuated in the Legislature. The Convention had thought proper to make them Constitutional officers, just as we should do. As we would do when we come to the criminal court of Baltimore, and other parts of the judiciary system. We would make them as they ought to be stable and steady, exactly as we had done in another case when we had adopted an article introduced on his motion directing the Legislature to make uniform modes of election or appointment of all officers, however subordinate they might be. He said they had done this to prevent these various officers from being made the foot-ball of party. The Convention had determined that for these reasons, the power to appoint these officers should be taken from the Legislature, and were willing to leave to the Legislature the power to fix their salaries. Now the gentleman from Prince George's [Mr. Tuck,] had moved a proposition to fix those salaries in the constitution. And for this proposition he said that the very branch of the Convention—he spoke it with great respect, for he knew those contrarieties in action and theories prevailed in all bodies of men—that was for committing all the powers over this subject to the Legislature, were now ready to deny to the same body the right of saying what salary or compensation such officers should receive. Look at this incompatibility of theory and action. If the Legislature was competent to be trusted with the whole subject, were they not of an inferior part?

Mr. TUCK. If the gentleman wished to impute any motive to him, he was entirely mistaken.

Mr. THOMAS. Very well, he, [Mr. T.,] was speaking of an extraordinary exhibition; he impugned the motives of no gentleman. If there was any attempt to get too much compensation for the commissioners, he would guarantee the Legislature would correct it. He would say that if he was a member of the Legislature, he would not vote for a large salary. He would allow the officer his travelling expenses. We had had a very high order of men filling the offices before, and now we had reduced the number from five to four. We had distributed throughout the whole State this power, because we did not want to put in the power of the people to take them all from one section or district. We had gone as far as was necessary, and for one, he was willing to leave the subject of compensation to the Legislature, where the agents heretofore expressed their willingness to leave the entire question. He moved to lay the whole subject on the table.

Mr. BOWIE intimated that he would like to say a few words in reply, if the gentleman would withdraw his motion.

Mr. THOMAS said that if he withdrew his motion, he had no doubt the consequence would be to re-open the whole discussion. He would withdraw it for the gentleman to whom he, [Mr. T.,] had replied, [Mr. Tuck,] if that gentleman desired it. If he opened it for the gentleman, (Mr. Bowie,) he would have to do so for others who had not spoken.